

IN THE CLAIMS

Upon entry of the present amendment, the status of the claims will be as is shown below. This listing of claims replaces all previous versions and listings of claims in the present application.

Listing of the claims:

1. (Currently amended) A mail exchange system, comprising:

a plurality of terminal devices connected to one another via a communications network, each terminal device having a member information storage that stores member information of members who belong to a group that exchange mail via said communications network, the plurality of the terminal devices comprising a specific member terminal, an existing member terminal, and a newly joining member terminal; said specific member terminal includes:

a participation mail receiver that receives participation mail, including member information of a member who newly joins the group, from said newly joining member terminal via said communications network;

a first member information adder that extracts the member information included in the participation mail received by said participation mail receiver and stores the extracted member information in the member information storage; and

a new member information mail transmitter that transmits a new member mail, including the member information of the newly joining member, to said existing member terminal according to information stored in said member information storage via said communications network,

said existing member terminal including:

a new member information mail receiver that receives the new member mail;

a second member information adder that extracts the member information included in the received new member mail and stores the extracted member information in a member list in the member information storage; and

a self-information mail transmitter that transmits an existing member mail, including self-member information, to said newly joining member terminal via said communications network, and

said newly joining member terminal including:

a new participation mail transmitter that transmits the new member mail, including self-member information of the newly joining member, to said specific member terminal via said communications network;

an existing member information mail receiver that receives existing member mail from a plurality of existing member terminals; and

a member information generator that generates entries in a member list stored in the member information storage by extracting the self-member information from the received existing member mail from the plurality of existing member terminals, other than the specific member terminal.

2. (Original) The mail exchange system according to claim 1, wherein each of said terminal devices further comprises:

a withdrawal mail transmitter that transmits withdrawal mail, including information of withdrawal from the group, to said terminal devices of all members in a member list stored in said member information storage;

a withdrawal mail receiver that receives the withdrawal mail, including the information of a withdrawing member, transmitted from said withdrawal mail transmitter of the terminal device of a withdrawing member; and

a member information deleter that deletes the member information of the withdrawing member from the member list in the mail member information storage.

3. (Original) The mail exchange system according to claim 1, wherein said specific member terminal further includes an invitation mail transmitter that transmits invite mail, including information for inviting participation in the group and self-member information, to said newly joining member terminal via said communications network;

wherein said newly joining member terminal further includes an invitation mail receiver that receives the invite mail; and

wherein said member information generator further generates the list in the member information storage based on the received invite mail.

4. (Original) The mail exchange system according to claim 1, wherein said specific member terminal further includes a second self-information mail transmitter that transmits specific member mail, including self-member information, to said newly joining member terminal in response to the participation mail received by said participation mail receiver;

wherein said newly joining member terminal further includes a specific member information mail receiver that receives the specific member mail, including the self-member information of the specific member; and

wherein said member information generator generates the member list stored in the member information storage based on the specific member mail received by said specific member information mail receiver.

5. (Original) The mail exchange system according to claim 1, wherein group information indicating the group exchanging the mail is added to the mail to be exchanged among said terminal devices of the members who belong to the group; and wherein the member list in the member information storage stores member information of members, who belong to the group.

6. (Original) The mail exchange system according to claim 5, wherein user information that uniquely specifies each user is allocated to each of said terminal devices; and

wherein the group information includes user information of the terminal device of a member who forms the group, and a time when said group is formed.

7. (Original) The mail exchange system according to claim 1, wherein each of the terminal devices includes a cellular phone.

8. (Currently amended) A mail exchange terminal device for exchanging mail with other mail exchange terminal devices via a communications network, comprising:
a member information storage that stores member information of a member, who belongs to a group exchanging mail;

a mail receiver that receives new member mail, including member information of a member who newly joins the group, from another mail exchange terminal device via said communications network;

a member information adder that extracts the member information included in the received new member mail and stores the extracted member information in a member list stored in the member information storage; and

a mail transmitter that transmits contact mail, including self-member information to said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member via said communications network, whereby said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member generates entries in a member list by extracting the self-member information from [[the]] contact mail received from a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices of existing members, the existing members being other than a specific member that sent an invite mail to said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member.

9. (Currently amended) The mail exchange terminal device according to claim 8, wherein the received new member mail is transmitted from said mail exchange terminal device of [[a]] the specific member, who already belongs to the group, to terminals of other members according to the list stored in the member information storage.

10. (Currently amended) A mail exchange terminal device for exchanging mail with other mail exchange terminal devices via a communications network, comprising:

a member information storage that stores member information of a member, who belongs to a group for exchanging mail;

a mail receiver that receives participation mail, including member information of a member, who newly joins in the group, from a mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member via said communications network;

a member information adder that extracts the member information included in the received mail and stores the extracted member information in a member list stored in the member information storage; and

a mail transmitter that transmits new member mail including the member information of the newly joining member to terminal devices of other existing members according to the list stored in the member information storage via said communications network, wherein the other existing members transmit contact mail, including member information, to the terminal device of the newly joining member so that the newly joining member generates an entry in a member list by extracting the member information from the contact mail of the other existing members, other than a specific member that sent an invite mail to said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member.

11. (Currently amended) A mail exchange terminal device for exchanging mail with other mail exchange terminal devices via a communications network, comprising:

an invitation mail receiver that receives invite mail for inviting participation in a group for exchanging mail that is already formed by a user of a specific mail exchange terminal device via said communications network;

a mail transmitter that transmits participation mail, including self-member information of a newly joining member, to the specific mail exchange terminal device via

said communications network at the time of joining the group in response to participation invited by the received invite mail;

an existing member information mail receiver that receives contact mail including member information of other existing members, which is transmitted from the mail exchange terminal devices of other existing members via said communications network in response to the participation mail transmitted to said mail exchange terminal device of the specific member; and

a member information generator that generates in a member information storage a member list that stores member information of a member, who belongs to the group, based on the received invite mail and the received contact mail, wherein an entry in the member list is generated from member information extracted from the received contact mail, the received contact mail being received from the mail exchange terminal devices of the other existing members, other than the specific mail exchange terminal device.

12. (Currently amended) A mail exchange terminal device for exchanging mail with other mail exchange terminal devices via a communications network, comprising:

a member information storage that stores member information of a member, who belongs to a group for exchanging mail;

a mail transmitter that transmits mail to a mail exchange terminal device of another member, who belongs to the group, via said communications network according to the member information stored in said member information storage;

a withdrawal mail transmitter that transmits withdrawal mail, including information of withdrawal from the group, to mail exchange terminal devices of all other members listed in the stored member information via said communications network;

a withdrawal mail receiver that receives withdrawal mail, including information, which indicates that another member is withdrawing from the group, from another mail exchange terminal device via said communications network; and

a member information deleter that deletes member information of all members from said member information storage belonging to the group in response to the withdrawal mail transmitter transmitting the withdrawal mail, wherein the member information deleter is configured to delete an member information in the member information storage corresponding to the withdrawing member based on the received withdrawal mail.

13. (Currently amended) A mail exchange terminal device for exchanging mail with other mail exchange terminal devices via a communications network, comprising a memory that stores a program and data, a processor that executes said program, and a communications device that communicates with other mail exchange terminal devices, wherein said program stored in memory causes said processor to execute:

storing member information of existing members, who belong to a group for exchanging mail, in said memory;

causing said communications device to receive a contact mail, including member information of a member who newly joins the group, from another mail exchange terminal device via the communications network;

extracting the member information included in the received contact mail and storing the extracted member information to said memory; and

causing said communications device to transmit invite mail including self-member information to said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member via said communications network, whereby said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member generates entries in a member list by extracting the self-member information from contact the invite mail received from a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices of existing members said communications device, the invite mail being received from existing members other than a specific member that sent an invite mail to said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member.

14. (Currently amended) A mail exchange terminal device for exchanging mail with other mail exchange terminal devices via a communications network, comprising a memory that stores a program and data, a processor that executes said program, and a communications device that communicates with other mail exchange terminal devices, wherein said program stored in memory causes said processor to execute:

storing member information of existing members, who belong to a group for exchanging mail, in said memory;

causing said communications device to receive a contact mail, including member information of a member who newly joins the group, from a mail exchange terminal device of a newly joining member via said communications network;

extracting the member information included in the received contact mail and storing the extracted member information to said memory; and

causing said communications device to transmit new member mail, including the member information of the newly joining member, to a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices of the existing members via said communications network, whereby the mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member generates entries in a member list by extracting member information from contact mail received from the plurality of mail exchange terminal devices of the existing members, the existing members being other than a member that sent an invite mail to the newly joining member.

15. (Currently amended) A mail exchange terminal device for exchanging mail with other mail exchange terminal devices via a communications network, comprising a memory that stores a program and data, a processor that executes said program, and a communications device that communicates with other mail exchange terminal devices, wherein said program stored in memory causes said processor to execute:

causing the communications device to receive an invitation mail inviting participation in a group, which is already formed by users of other mail exchange terminal devices, from a mail exchange terminal device of a specific member via said communications network;

causing the communications device to transmit participation mail, including self-member information of a newly joining member, to the mail exchange terminal device of the specific member via the communications network at the time of joining the group where participation was invited by the received invitation mail;

causing the communications device to receive contact mail, which is transmitted from the mail exchange terminal devices of other existing members via said

communications network in response to the mail transmitted to said mail exchange terminal device of the specific member, and includes member information of an existing member; and

storing member information of members, who belong to the group, in said memory based on the received invitation mail and the received contact mail, by extracting member information from the received contact mail and generating an entry in a memory list for a member corresponding to the extracted member information, the received contact mail being received from the mail exchange terminal devices of the other existing members, other than the mail exchange terminal device of the specific member.

16. (Currently amended) A mail exchange terminal device for exchanging mail with other mail exchange terminal devices via a communications network, comprising a memory that stores a program and data, a processor that executes said program, and a communications device that communicates with other mail exchange terminal devices, wherein said program stored in memory causes said processor to execute:

storing member information of existing members, who belong to a group where mail is exchanged, in said memory;

transmitting mail to mail exchange terminal devices of other members who belong to the group, via said communications network according to the stored member information;

causing said communications device to transmit a withdrawal mail, including information of withdrawal from the group, to the mail exchange terminal devices of all

other members according to the stored member information via said communications network;

causing said communications device to receive the withdrawal mail, including information, indicating that another member is withdrawing from the group, from another mail exchange terminal device via said communications network; and

deleting member information of all members from said member information storage belonging to the group in response to the communications device transmitting the withdrawal mail, and deleting member information of said another member from said memory in response to said communications device receiving the withdrawal mail indicating that another member is withdrawing from the group.

17. (Currently amended) A method for exchanging mail among terminal devices connected to one another via a communications network, each terminal device having a member information storage that stores member information of members who belong to a group for exchanging mail, comprising:

transmitting participation mail, including member information of a member who newly joins the group, to a terminal device of a specific member from said terminal device of the newly joining member via said communications network;

receiving the participation mail at the terminal device of the specific member;

extracting the member information of the newly joining member from the received participation mail at said terminal device of the specific member and storing the extracted member information to said storage;

transmitting new member mail, including the member information of the newly joining member, to terminal devices of other existing members from said terminal device

of the specific member via said communications network according to the member information stored in said storage of said terminal device of the specific member;

receiving the new member mail at said terminal devices of the other existing members;

extracting the member information of the newly joining member from the new member mail received from said terminal device of the specific member at said terminal devices of the other existing members and storing the extracted member information in the storages of the terminal devices;

transmitting contact mail including the member information of the existing members to said terminal device of the new member from said terminal devices of the existing members via said communications network;

receiving the contact mail at said terminal device of the new member; and

extracting the member information of the existing members from the received contact mail at said terminal device of the new member and storing the extracted member information in said storage as a plurality of entries, wherein each entry is generated in response to an individual contact mail received from an associated individual terminal device of an existing member, other than the specific member.

18. (Original) The mail exchange method according to claim 17, further comprising transmitting withdrawal mail including information, indicating that a member corresponding to a terminal device is withdrawing from the group, to all other terminal devices from the withdrawing terminal device according to the stored member information;

wherein the withdrawal mail is received at each of the other terminal devices; and

wherein the member information corresponding to the received withdrawal mail is deleted from said member information storage at each of the other terminal devices.

19. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which a program to be executed by each mail exchange terminal is recorded to exchange mail among a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices connected to one another via a communications network, said program causing a computer to execute:

storing member information of existing members, who belong to a group for exchanging mail, in a memory;

causing a communications device to receive a contact mail, including member information of a member who newly joins the group, from another mail exchange terminal device via the communications network;

extracting the member information included in the received contact mail and storing the extracted member information to said memory; and

causing said communications device to transmit invite mail, including self-member information, to a mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member via said communications network, whereby the mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member generates entries in a member list by extracting the self-member information from the invite mail received from a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices of existing members said communications device, the invite mail being received from existing members other than a specific member that sent a participation invitation mail to said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member.

20. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium including a program to be executed by each of a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices to exchange mail among the plurality of mail exchange terminal devices connected to one another via a communications network, said program causing a computer to execute:

storing member information of existing members, who belong to a group for exchanging mail, in a memory;

causing a communications device to receive a contact mail, including member information of a member who newly joins the group, from a mail exchange terminal device of a newly joining member via said communications network;

extracting the member information included in the received contact mail and storing the extracted member information to said memory; and

causing said communications device to transmit new member mail including the member information of the newly joining member to a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices of the existing members stored in said memory via said communications network, whereby the mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member generates entries in a member list by extracting member information from contact mail received from the plurality of mail exchange terminal devices of the existing members, the existing members being other than a specific member that sent an invite mail to said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member.

21. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium including a program to be executed by each of a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices to exchange mail among the plurality of mail exchange terminal devices connected to one another via a communications network, said program causing a computer to execute:

causing a communications device to receive an invitation mail inviting participation in a group, previously formed by users of other mail exchange terminal devices, from another mail exchange terminal device of a specific member via said communications network;

causing the communications device to transmit participation mail, including self-member information of a newly joining member, to the mail exchange terminal device of the specific member via the communications network at the time of joining the group where participation was invited by the received invitation mail;

causing the communications device to receive contact mail, which is transmitted from mail exchange terminal devices of other existing members via said communications network in response to the participation mail transmitted to said mail exchange terminal device of the specific member, and includes member information of the other existing members; and

storing member information of members, who belong to the group, in said memory based on the received invitation mail and the received contact mail, by extracting self-member information from the contact mail and generating an entry in a memory list for a member corresponding to the extracted self-member information, the received contact mail being received from the mail exchange terminal devices of the other existing members, other than the mail exchange terminal device of the specific member.

22. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium including a program to be executed by each of a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices to exchange mail among the plurality of mail exchange terminal devices connected to one

another via a communications network, wherein each mail exchange terminal device comprises a communications device, said program causing a computer to execute:

storing member information of existing members, who belong to a group for exchanging mail, in a memory;

transmitting mail to mail exchange terminal devices of other members, who belong to the group, via said communications network according to the stored member information;

causing said communications device to transmit a withdrawal mail, including information of withdrawal from the group, to the mail exchange terminal devices of the other members according to the stored member information via said communications network;

causing said communications device to receive the withdrawal mail, including information indicating that another member is withdrawing from the group, from another mail exchange terminal device via said communications network; and

deleting member information of all members from said member information storage belonging to the group in response to the communications device transmitting the withdrawal mail, and deleting member information of said another member from said memory in response to said communications device receiving the withdrawal mail indicating that another member is withdrawing from the group.

23. (Currently amended) A carrier wave having a program data signal, executed by each of a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices to exchange mail among the plurality of mail exchange terminal devices connected to one another via a communications network, wherein said program causes a computer to execute:

storing member information of existing members, who belong to a group for exchanging mail in a memory;

causing a communications device to receive a contact mail including member information of a member, who newly joins the group, from another mail exchange terminal device via the communications network;

extracting the member information included in the received contact mail and storing the extracted member information to said memory; and

causing said communications device to transmit invite mail, including self-member information, to a mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member via said communications network, whereby the mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member generates entries in a member list by extracting member information from invite mail received from a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices of existing members, the existing members being other than a specific member that sent a participation invitation mail to said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member.

24. (Currently amended) A carrier wave having a program data signal, executed by each of a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices to exchange mail among the plurality of mail exchange terminal devices connected to one another via a communications network, wherein said program causes a computer to execute:

storing member information of existing members, who belong to a group for exchanging mail, in a memory;

causing a communications device to receive a contact mail, including member information of a member who newly joins the group, from a mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member via said communications network;

extracting the member information included in the received contact mail and storing the extracted member information to said memory; and

causing said communications device to transmit new member mail, including the member information of the newly joining member, to a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices of the existing members via said communications network, whereby the mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member generates entries in a member list by extracting member information from contact mail received from the plurality of mail exchange terminal devices of the existing members, the existing members being other than a specific member that sent an invitation mail to said mail exchange terminal device of the newly joining member.

25. (Currently amended) A carrier wave having a program data signal, executed by each of a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices to exchange mail among the plurality of mail exchange terminal devices connected to one another via a communications network, wherein said program causes a computer to execute:

causing a communications device to receive an invitation mail inviting participation in a group, previously formed by users of other mail exchange terminal devices, from a mail exchange terminal device of a specific member via said communications network;

causing the communications device to transmit participation mail, including self-member information of a newly joining member, to the mail exchange terminal device of

the specific member via the communications network at the time of joining the group where participation was invited by the received invitation mail;

causing the communications device to receive contact mail, which is transmitted from mail exchange terminal devices of other existing members via said communications network in response to the participation mail being transmitted to said mail exchange terminal device of the specific member, wherein the contact mail includes member information of the other existing members; and

storing member information of members, who belong to the group, in said memory based on the received invitation mail and the received contact mail, by extracting self-member information from the contact mail and generating an entry in a memory list for a member corresponding to the extracted self-member information, the received contact mail being received from the mail exchange terminal devices of the other existing members, other than the mail exchange terminal device of the specific member.

26. (Currently amended) A carrier wave having a program data signal, executed by each mail exchange terminal device to exchange mail among a plurality of mail exchange terminal devices connected to one another via a communications network, wherein each mail exchange terminal device comprises a communications device, said program causes a computer to execute:

storing member information of existing members, who belong to a group for exchanging mail, in a memory;

transmitting mail to mail exchange terminal devices of other members, who belong to the group, via said communications network according to the stored member information;

causing said communications device to transmit a withdrawal mail, including information of withdrawal from the group, to the mail exchange terminal devices of the other members according to the stored member information via said communications network;

causing said communications device to receive the withdrawal mail, including information indicating that another member is withdrawing from the group, from another mail exchange terminal device via said communications network; and

deleting member information of all members from said member information storage belonging to the group in response to the communications device transmitting the withdrawal mail, and deleting member information of said another member from said memory in response to said communications device receiving the withdrawal mail indicating that another member is withdrawing from the group.